

STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA CLASS SPECIFICATION

Class Title: Dental Assistant

Class Code: 50640

A. Purpose:

Assists the dentist or dental hygienist by seating clients, participating in the dentistry techniques, by handling the dentist instrument and mixing compounds for tooth repair and maintaining the instruments and dental area in a sanitary manner.

B. Distinguishing Feature:

Dental Assistant assists the dentist or dental hygienist by passing instruments, mixing dental compounds and seating clients; trains clients in oral hygiene such as toothbrushing and flossing. The Dental Assistant works under close supervision of the dentist and/or dental hygienist.

C. Functions:

(These are examples only; any one position may not include all of the listed examples nor do the listed examples include all functions that may be found in positions of this class.)

1. Assists dentists to provide dental care to clients.
 - a. Passes instruments.
 - b. Mixes treatment.
 - c. Fills materials.
2. Disinfects the dental operator and sterilizes equipment to ensure a sanitary dental environment.
3. Positions and exposes intraoral and extraoral dental radiographs to develop and produce quality X-rays.
4. Schedules, records, and controls patient visits to ensure accurate dental records for the clients.
5. Participates in the provision of oral health care by providing toothbrushing and flossing instructions and techniques to clients and staff to ensure adequate dental care for clients.
6. Performs other work as assigned.

D. Reporting Relationships:

Typically the incumbent does not supervise.

E. Challenges and Problems:

Challenged to communicate to multi-handicapped clients that the dental procedures being provided are beneficial to their health and how to teach the clients toothbrushing and flossing techniques.

Typical problems include selecting the proper placement of instruments for the dentist and how to transfer handicapped clients in a dental chair.

F. Decision-making Authority:

Decisions made include proper arrangement of instruments; techniques of instruments passing; correct proportionment, amount of working time of dental materials; and mixing techniques for optimum physical properties of dental materials.

Decisions referred include diagnoses, treatment plans, and specialized techniques for clients.

G. Contact with Others:

Daily contact with dentists to assist them in dental procedures and receive instructions, and with clients to provide dental care.

H. Working Conditions:

Work with handicapped clients who may also be aggressive. Incumbents handle sharp and/or contaminated instruments, risking exposure to communicable disease. Incumbents also risk being exposed to X-rays.

I. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities:

Knowledge of:

- dental office and dental operative procedures;
- oral hygiene.

Ability to:

- deal effectively with patients;
- follow oral and written instructions;
- pass a written examination and proficiency evaluation to be registered as a dental radiographer.